Steps to encourage sale of Virginia Tobacco

4031. SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Tobacco Board conducted any meeting to encourage trading companies, exports and others to buy Virginia tobacco lying with farmers in the current season;

(b) if so, the details of such meetings held with traders and manufacturers;

(c) what was the response; and

(d) the full details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH): (a) and (b) Tobacco Board has conducted a number of meetings with traders, manufacturers and exporters to offer remunerative prices to the farmers. Besides this, the Tobacco Board has also set up a control room for assistance.

(c) and (d) The response may be gauged by the results of auctions. At the end of 8 weeks, a total quantity of 29.96 M.Kgs. of tobacco was marketed at an average price of Rs. 39.51 as against a quantity of 19.96 M.Kgs. marketed at an average price of Rs. 34.38 for the corresponding period (8th week) during last year. The average price realised upto 8th week during 1997 AP auctions is more by Rs. 5.13 per kg. when compared to the average price realised for the corresponding period last year.

Opening of auction centres la Andhra Pradesh by the Tobacco Board

4032. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Auction Centres opened by the Tobacco Board in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka;

(b) The number of new Auction Centres proposed to be opened in Andhra Pradesh; and

(c) the details thereof;

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH) (a) Tobacco Board is operating 20 Auction platforms in Andhra Pradesh for the auction period commencing in February 1997 and operated 7 Auction Platforms in Karnataka during auctions held between November 1996 upto February 1997.

(b) and (c) Three auction platforms one each at Medaramctla, Podili and Kandukur in Andhra Pradesh were opened recently in February 1997 as 17 earlier platforms were found to be insufficient to clear the crop

Paying wards in Government Hospitals

4033. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to start "Paying Wards" in all Government Hospitals;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP): (a) to (c) Some of the Central Government Hospitals namely Dr. Ram Manohar Hospital, Smt. Suchtta Kriplani Hospital, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, Jawaharlal Institute of Post Graducate Medical Education and Research, Pondicherry, and post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh are already maintaining "Paying Wards".